

# Maryland's Best

Connecting Maryland farmers with consumers

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**Chief of Marketing**

**Maryland Department of**  
**Agriculture**





# MDA's Buy Local Program

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- ☐ Connecting Farmers with Markets
  - ☐ Branding Maryland Grown Products
  - ☐ Increasing Consumer Demand and Preference for Maryland Grown Products
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# Maryland's Best Web Site

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- ❑ [www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net) ... is growing, improving
- ❑ December 2008 – 2,845 visitors
- ❑ In 2014 – 37,716 visitors, visited 50,149 times
- ❑ Since 2007 – 220,303 visitors, visited 296,867 times
- ❑ Advertising has reached more than 3,000,000 regional consumers
- ❑ Web site updates including smart phone friendly access in 2014 through USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant

**Connecting consumers with farmers &  
sharing the farmers stories**

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# Maryland's Best Web Site

## www.marylandsbest.net



## Searchable Database and Seasonal Agricultural Promotions

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Maryland's Best Agriculture website. The header features the site's logo on the left, the title "LINKING MARYLAND FARMERS WITH CONSUMERS" in the center, and social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) on the right. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for "FEATURES", "RECIPES &amp; TIPS", and "NEWS &amp; EVENTS". A search bar is prominently displayed with the placeholder text "I'm Looking for..." and filters for "All locations" and "All categories". A green button labeled "FIND LOCAL FARMS" is also present. The main content area features a large article titled "Maryland Grain Farmers" with a detailed description of the state's grain production. To the right of the article is a video player showing a man standing in a cornfield. Below the article is a yellow banner that reads "Mid-Atlantic Farmers Feed Us". At the bottom of the page, there is a section for "MARYLAND'S BEST" with a call to action to "REGISTER FOR THE MD BUYER GROWER EXPO ON 1/22". On the right side of the bottom section is a "PRODUCER LOGIN/REGISTER" form with "Login" and "Register" buttons, and a link to "click here to register" for existing users.



# Registering your farm or farmer's market



Select the Producer Registration link on the right side of the home page

A screenshot of the Maryland Producer Registration Form. The form is titled "MARYLAND PRODUCER REGISTRATION FORM" and includes a "PRODUCER LOGIN/REGISTER" section with "Login" and "Register" buttons. The registration section contains fields for Organization (required), Contact First Name (required), Contact Last Name (required), Contact Email (required), Contact Phone Number (required), Organization Website, and Organization Address. The login section includes a "Remember Me" checkbox and a "LOG IN" button. Below the login section is a "MY FAVORITE PRODUCERS" section with a "★ MY FAVORITE PRODUCERS ★" header and a description: "Add producers of interest to your Favorites list and click the link above to map and manage them." At the bottom is an "ADVANCED SEARCH" section with a "Country and State" dropdown menu.

**MARYLAND'S BEST Agriculture**

## MARYLAND PRODUCER REGISTRATION FORM

Please enter your business and contact information in the form below. We will review your application and get back to you with login information so that you can manage your account. If you do not have an email account, or have any questions please [contact us](#) for assistance.

Organization (required)

Contact First Name (required)

Contact Last Name (required)

Contact Email (required)

Contact Phone Number (required)

Organization Website

Organization Address

### PRODUCER LOGIN/REGISTER

Login Register

Already have an account? Enter your email and password below to login or [click here to register](#).

I'm registered but don't know my password  
Email

Password

☐ Remember Me

### ★ MY FAVORITE PRODUCERS ★

Add producers of interest to your Favorites list and click the link above to map and manage them.

### ADVANCED SEARCH

Country and State



# Registering on Maryland's Best

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- Once you have selected the Producer Registration link on the home page, fill in your company information.
  - MDA will then setup an account for your listing on the web site and you will receive a password and log in information.
  - Log in on the home page with your email address and new password.
  - Once logged in, be sure to fill out all of the information pertaining to your farm including selecting all of the category boxes that apply to your listing.
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# 2015 Maryland Promotions by Month

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- ☐ January/February – CSAs
  - ☐ February – winter farmers markets
  - ☐ March – meat, nutrition month
  - ☐ April –nurseries & garden centers, poultry
  - ☐ May/June – eggs, strawberries, farmers' markets, milk
  - ☐ June - wine, dairy
  - ☐ July/August – Buy local challenge, watermelons, farmers markets
  - ☐ September - Apples, farm to school
  - ☐ October/November – Ag-tourism, turkeys, pumpkins
  - ☐ December – Christmas trees
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# 2014 Advertising & Promotions



**Enjoy Maryland Wine and Support Our Family Farmers**

To find a local vineyard near you visit  
[www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net)

Proud partner of  
**THE 2012 URBANITE PROJECT**

**Spring is here  
and so are  
Sweet Maryland  
Strawberries**

Find out who has  
local strawberries  
near you at  
[www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net)

Proud partner of  
**THE 2012 URBANITE PROJECT**

**Choose Maryland Apples**

JD Rinehart of  
Rinehart Orchards

To find  
local  
apples  
near you  
**CLICK  
HERE**

facebook

Search for people, places and things

Store Mode Home

Create A Page

Sponsored by

Official Obama Website

ADD YOUR NAME

\$3,150 for Home Upgrades

Start with a Home Performance Energy Audit for just \$100. Get rebates up to \$2,100 for home energy efficiency upgrades.

Motorcycle Tech Training

Join to be a Motorcycle Repair Tech at MDC. Classes start every 6 weeks. CLICK for info!

Maryland's Best

403 likes · 28 talking about this

Like Message

About Photos Likes

Post Photo / Video

Write something...

Maryland's Best shared a link via HootSuite, about an hour ago

Official Kick Off @Maryland Home Grown School Lunch Week

10 friends like Maryland's Best

Recent Posts by Others on Maryland's Best

Kristen Newberger

Maryland's Best shared a link via HootSuite, about an hour ago

Home Notifications Messages Discover

Search

Maryland's Best

@MDsBest

Maryland's Best is your source to find the best local food and products from Maryland farmers. Managed by the Marketing team at the MD Dept. of Ag. 410-641-5770

Annapolis, MD

[marylandsbest.net](http://marylandsbest.net)

Joined March 2011

TWEETS 11.6K FOLLOWING 860 FOLLOWERS 4,033 FAVORITES 644 LISTS 2

Tweets Tweets & replies Photos & videos

Maryland's Best retweeted

Maryland Agriculture @MdAgDept · 17h

Do you raise chickens or turkeys? Here is some very important information for you. [owlyKdWVO](#)

3 1

Maryland's Best @MDsBest · Mar 11

#MD farmers produce a wide variety of fruits



# 2014

## Advertising & Promotions

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- ☐ WYPR Public Radio
  - ☐ Washington Post Print
  - ☐ WBAL Online
  - ☐ Strategic Consumer Promotions
  - ☐ Facebook, Twitter, Google, [YouTube channel](#)
  - ☐ Trade press – The Packer, Produce News
  - ☐ Press Releases
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# Connecting Farmers with Grocery Retailers



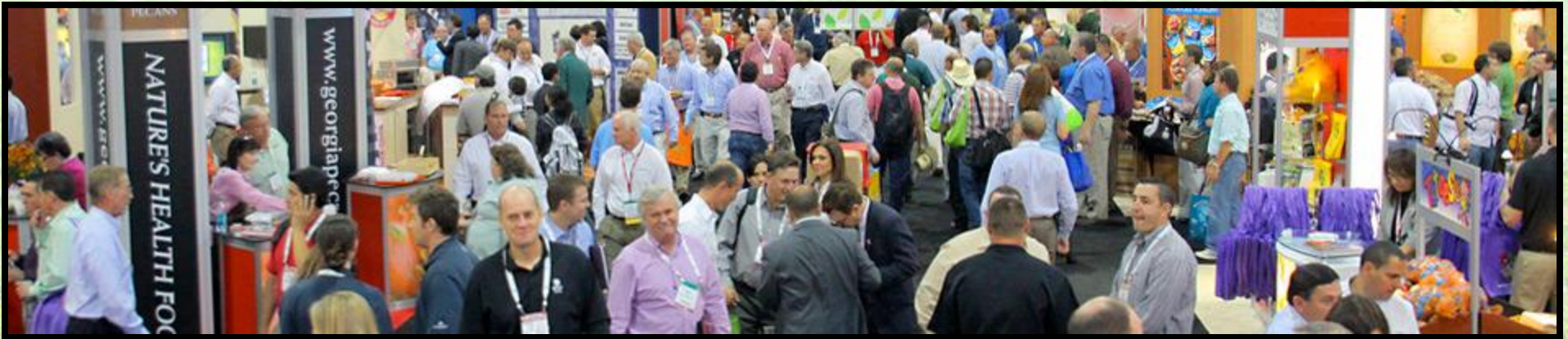


# Connecting Farmers with Grocery Retailers

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- ❑ Trade shows: Including PMA's Fresh Summit- largest produce expo



- 20,000 Participants
  - Decision Makers from Nearly all of the Grocery Retailers
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# Connecting Farmers to Consumer Markets



**Buyer-Grower Expo**– connecting farmers with buyers from grocery retailers, schools, restaurants, farmers markets, and institutions.



- 350 Participants
- 60 Farms Exhibited
- 146 Buyers Attended
- 90% of Exhibitors reported potential sales



# Consumer Promotions



## Mar-Delicious Watermelon Campaign in New England

## Maryland Apple In-Store Promotions

**The MAR-DELicious Promotional Campaign**

 **Creating Consumer Demand in  
New England for MAR-DELicious Watermelons**

The Maryland and Delaware Departments of Agriculture in partnership with the MAR-DEL Watermelon Association will be executing a promotional campaign in New England to increase consumer demand for MAR-DELicious watermelons. We will be looking to create lasting partnerships with retailers who want to take advantage of MAR-DELicious watermelon advertising support for their stores.

**How can your company benefit from the MAR-DELicious Campaign?**

- Creating strategic advertising partnerships with grocery retailers to promote stores selling MAR-DELicious watermelons
- Radio and other advertising to promote MAR-DELicious watermelons during the first 2 weeks of August
- In-store promotional materials, watermelon bins featuring the MAR-DELicious logo, and visits from the MAR-DEL Watermelon Queen in select stores
- Direct contact with MAR-DELicious watermelon brokers and farmers to insure adequate supply



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**ENJOY  
Maryland Apples  
THIS SEASON!**



Join us on  
**SATURDAY,  
NOV. 9TH**  
FROM 10 AM TO 3 PM  
to learn about  
our State's apple  
farmers and the  
varieties they offer.  
***Taste the difference  
when buying local!***

We'll have plenty of  
samples too!

 **WHOLE  
FOODS  
MARKET**  
ANNAPOLIS 



# Consumer Promotions



## Buy Local Challenge

The promotional graphic for the Buy Local Challenge is a rectangular banner with a dark red background. On the left side, there is a photograph of a green plate with breaded fish and a wooden pizza with toppings. Below the food is a small calendar for the month of July, with the dates 20-28 highlighted. The text "Take the Buy Local Challenge" is written in large, bold, yellow and red letters. Below this, it says "July 20-28, 2013". A small graphic of a tomato with a banner that says "TAKE THE CHALLENGE!" is also present. The text "I pledge to eat at least one thing from a local farm every day during Buy Local Week!" is written in white. At the bottom left, it says "Buy local all year...www.marylandsbest.net". On the right side, there is a photograph of three men standing outdoors. Above the photo, it says "Hey Maryland, Take the Buy Local Challenge Outdoors ... and WIN!". Below the photo, it says "Good Luck!". At the bottom right, there is a small paragraph of text about the prize basket and donation.

Hey Maryland, Take the Buy Local Challenge Outdoors ... and WIN!

Enter this year's photo contest: "Take the Challenge Outdoors!"

It's easy! Take the official Buy Local Challenge pledge at [www.buy-local-challenge.com](http://www.buy-local-challenge.com) before July 18, 2013. Then visit [www.facebook.com/marylandbuylocalchallenge](http://www.facebook.com/marylandbuylocalchallenge) and upload one or more photos of how you took the Challenge outdoors.

It's fun! Plan a picnic, a patio party, a grill-fest or just a brown-bag lunch in the park. See the web for full contest details.

I pledge to eat at least one thing from a local farm every day during Buy Local Week!

Individuals, businesses and organizations can take the "Buy Local Challenge." It's a voluntary pledge to include Maryland-grown products (produce, eggs, meat, fruit, wine, etc.) in your meals for one week. Visit the website to find out more about the Challenge, and download your personalized certificate when you pledge!

Buy local all year...[www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net)



Good Luck!

One winning entry will receive a prize basket valued at \$200. In addition, a donation of fresh local farm food, valued at \$200, will be made in your name to local families in need via a local food bank and partners statewide.

- Pledge to eat at least one thing from a MD farm each day for one week
- Over 5,000 Marylanders pledged to participate in 2014



# Consumer Promotions



## Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail

### Trail Passport



### Ice Cream Trail Signs



- Ice Cream & Geocache Trail
- 8 Creameries on the Trail
- 375 Completed Passports since 2012
- Stamped Passport at each location
- Maryland Dairy Industry Trivia



# Plans for 2015 and beyond.....

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- ☐ Continuing specialty crop advertising to Maryland consumers
  - ☐ Ag-Tourism Sign Program
  - ☐ In-store Maryland apple promotion
  - ☐ Partnership with the Baltimore Orioles
  - ☐ Maryland watermelon billboards
  - ☐ Partnerships with grocery retailers
  - ☐ Additional strategic promotions
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# Farmers' Market Signing Program





# Eligibility

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Farmers' Markets that are recognized by the Maryland Department of Agriculture and identified on the current Maryland Farmer's Market Directory.

[http://mda.maryland.gov/maryland\\_products/Documents/Farmers\\_Market\\_Directory%20.pdf](http://mda.maryland.gov/maryland_products/Documents/Farmers_Market_Directory%20.pdf)

Applications for the program can be found at the following address

[http://mda.maryland.gov/maryland\\_products/Pages/farmers\\_market\\_dir.aspx](http://mda.maryland.gov/maryland_products/Pages/farmers_market_dir.aspx)





# Current Participation

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- ❑ 41 Markets with signs in the State





# Ag-Tourism Signing Program

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- ☐ Partnership with MDA and State Highway Administration
  - ☐ Signs available for ag-tourism destinations that meet the program qualifications
  - ☐ Counties must first setup their own ag-tourism signing program
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# Ag-Tourism Signing Program

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- ❑ The application and guidelines can be found in the Maryland Product section of **[www.mda.maryland.gov](http://www.mda.maryland.gov)**





# Thank you!

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